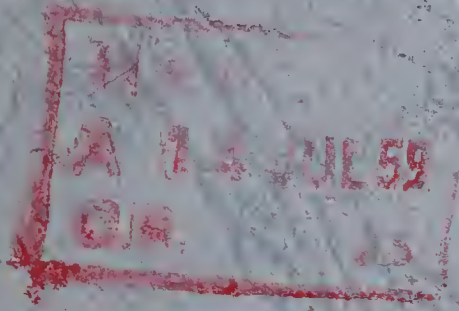


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The Urban District of Kirkham



Annual Health Report for the Year 1958



Medical Officer of Health :

C. ROBERTSON WILSON, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.(Edin.).

Surveyor and Public Health Inspector :

E. RIDDIOUGH, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I., A.M.I.P.H.E., L.I.O.B.

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HEALTH COMMITTEE

Councillor T. A. Ruxton (Chairman)

Councillor Mrs. D. G. M. Sanderson

Councillor T. Ward, J.P.

Councillor R. Lavelle, J.P.

Councillor J. Whiteside

Councillor R. Salisbury

Councillor J. Lawler

Councillor H. Jones

Councillor J. Whiteside (Woodlands)

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health:

C. ROBERTSON WILSON, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (Edin.)

Surveyor and Public Health Inspector:

E. RIDDIOUGH, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I., A.M.I.P.H.E., L.I.O.B.

Clerk: N. Swift, A.C.C.S.

Pupil Public Health Inspector: B. D. Rogerson

Annual Health Report

of the

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR 1958

To the Chairman and Members of the Kirkham
Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Lady and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1958.

The general health of the Urban District has been satisfactory and there has been nothing really outstanding to report.

The incidence of notifiable infectious disease has been negligible apart from 175 cases of Measles and 21 cases of Sonne Dysentery. The latter occurred as an outbreak in the Residential Nursery in the early month of the year. Unfortunately, the diarrhoea had become quite widespread and some staff affected as well as children before the situation was reported and its true nature recognised by laboratory checking. Being a self-contained community the administrative handling of this outbreak did not present great difficulty but a number of the individual cases proved rather resistant to clearing up and the Nursery was closed to admissions for some time. The measles started in the district about mid-autumn and was still with us at the close of the year.

Some influenza occurred during the autumn, but, not being notifiable, no figures are available. There was nothing approaching the dislocation resulting from the outbreak during autumn 1957.

Both the Birth Rate and the Death Rate in the district were lower in 1958. No deaths have occurred in childbirth and it is pleasing to note that during the year there were no deaths of

infants under one year old, compared with two in 1957. There were no deaths due to Tuberculosis, now a steadily declining disease, but the deaths from malignant growths (cancer) are up from nine to eleven.

To my colleagues in the work of the Health Department my grateful thanks are due ; also to you, Mr. Chairman, the Clerk of the Council and the members of the Health Committee.

Yours faithfully,

C. ROBERTSON WILSON

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area (in acres)	940
Home Population	4,830
(At the 1951 census the population was 6,874. The home population in 1957 was 6,330).	
Number of inhabited houses at 31/12/58	1,459
Rateable value at 31/12/58	£50,133
Amount produced by a penny rate	£200

VITAL STATISTICS

Births.—65 births (30 males and 35 females) were registered during the year. The birth rate of 12.8 per 1,000 compared with a rate of 18.0 per 1,000 in 1957.

Stillbirths.—There was 1 stillbirth during the year, making a stillbirth rate of 15.2 per 1,000 total live and stillbirths compared with a rate of 32 in 1957.

Deaths.—56 deaths (32 males and 24 females) were registered during the year. The death rate at 12.9 per 1,000 compared with a death rate of 14.0 per 1,000 in 1957.

Infantile Mortality.—No deaths of infants under one year of age occurred, compared with 2 in 1957.

The infantile mortality rate was 0 compared with a rate of 22 per 1,000 in 1957.

Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years of age	0
Maternal Mortality	0
Deaths from Tuberculosis, all ages	0
Deaths from Tuberculosis of the Respiratory System	0
Deaths from Cancer	11

CAUSES OF DEATH

The table below shows the causes of death of Urban District residents in 1958.

Cause of death	M	F	T
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	2	...	2
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	2	...	2
Malignant neoplasm, breast	—	1	1
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms ...	5	1	6
Vascular lesions of nervous system	3	6	9
Coronary disease, angina	5	4	9
Other heart disease	3	3	6
Other circulatory disease	3	2	5
Pneumonia	3	—	3
Bronchitis	1	1	2
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	1	1	2
Nephritis and nephrosis	—	1	1
Congenital malformations	1	—	1
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	1	4	5
All other accidents	2	—	2
	<hr/> 32	<hr/> 24	<hr/> 56

The table below shows the comparisons between birth and death rates in England and Wales and this district for the past five years:

Year	England and Wales		Kirkham Urban District	
	Births	Deaths	Births	Deaths
1954	15.2	11.3	18.1	12.4
1955	15.0	11.7	11.8	11.4
1956	15.7	11.7	15.7	11.0
1957	16.1	11.5	18.0	14.0
1958	16.4	11.7	12.8	12.9

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES

Personnel:—

Medical Officer of Health:

C. ROBERTSON WILSON, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (Edin.)

Other appointments held: Medical Officer of Health Borough of Lytham St Annes, Urban Districts of Poulton-le-Fylde, Pearsall and Thornton Cleveleys, and Fylde Rural District, Divisional Medical Officer of Health, Health Division No. 3, Lancashire County Council.

Surveyor and Public Health Inspector:

E. RIDDIOUGH, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I., A. M.I.P.H.E., L.I.O.B.

Hospital Facilities.—For general cases the main hospitals used are the Preston Royal Infirmary of the Preston and Chorley Hospital Management Committee and the Blackpool Victoria, Wesham Park and Lytham St. Annes Hospitals of the Blackpool and Fylde Hospital Management Committee. Infectious diseases cases are admitted to the Devonshire Road Hospital, Blackpool, excepting in the cases of Tuberculosis and Smallpox. Main provision for cases of Tuberculosis is at Elswick Sanatorium. Accommodation for Smallpox is provided by the Manchester Regional Hospital Board at the Ainsworth Smallpox Hospital, near Bury.

Ambulance Facilities.—The Ambulance Service is administered by the Lancashire County Council. The needs of the district are met by vehicles from the Wesham Ambulance Station.

Laboratory Facilities.—Bacteriological examinations of specimens are carried out in laboratories at Blackpool Victoria Hospital and Preston Royal Infirmary. The latter laboratory is also used for the examination of water and milk supplies.

Professional Nursing in the Home.—General nursing cases and confinements are attended by District Nurses and Midwives of the Lancashire County Council.

Venereal Disease Service.—Facilities for treatment of Venereal Disease are available at Blackpool Victoria Hospital and Preston Royal Infirmary.

School Medical and Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics.—A County Council Clinic is located in Mellor Road and sessions held, at the time of preparation of this report, are as follows:

Monday, a.m.—Minor Ailments Clinic.

Monday, a.m. and p.m.—Speech Therapy.

Tuesday, p.m.—Ante-Natal (alternate Tuesdays).

Thursday, a.m.—Immunisation (third Thursday in each month).

Thursday, a.m.—Minor Ailments.

Thursday, a.m.—Vaccination (third Thursday in each month).

Thursday, p.m.—Child Welfare Clinic.

Friday, a.m. and p.m.—Dental Session,

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The following table shows the numbers of diseases other than tuberculosis notified during the year 1958.

Diseases	Total Cases Notified												
	Total Cases at all ages	Under 1 year											
		1—	2—	3—	4—	5—	10—	15—	25—	45—	65 and over	Age unknown	Total Deaths
Scarlet Fever													1
Whooping Cough													
Acute Poliomyelitis — Paralytic									1				
„ Non-Paralytic ...													
Measles (excluding Rubella) 175	2	11	14	19	19	102	5		2			1	
Diphtheria													
Dysentery	21	2	4	4	4	1		4	2				
Meningococcal Infection ...													
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...													
Acute Pneumonia (Prim. and Infl'zal) ...	1						1						3
Smallpox													
Acute Encephalitis—Infec- tive													
„ Post-Infectious													
Enteric or Typhoid Fever ...													
Paratyphoid Fevers													
Erysipelas													
Food Poisoning													
Puerperal Pyrexia													
Other notifiable diseases ...													
TOTAL	197	4	15	18	23	20	102	6	4	4	0	0	1 3

TUBERCULOSIS

A tuberculosis service is provided in its various aspects by the Regional Hospital Board, the Lancashire County Council and District Councils. The Hospital Board is responsible mainly for treatment, the County Council for prevention, care and after care, and the Sanitary Authority also for prevention. A Tuberculosis Health Visitor is provided by the Lancashire County Council and the Hospital and Chest Clinic facilities by the Blackpool and Fylde Hospital Management Committee.

New Cases and Mortality during 1958.

Age Periods		—New Cases—				—Deaths—			
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
				Non-Pulmon'y				Non-Pulmon'y	
0— 1	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1— 5	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5—10	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
10—15	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
15—20	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
20—25	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
25—35	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
35—45	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
45—55	.....	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
55—65	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
65 and upwards	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals	.....	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
		1		0		0		0	

In 1957 there was 1 new case notified, and 0 deaths reported from the disease.

To the Chairman and Members of the Kirkham
Urban District Council

Lady and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my seventh annual report on the work done in the Public Health Department during 1958.

During the year more routine work was carried out due to the assistance of the Pupil Public Health Inspector, and the second Clearance Area was prepared. There were no major changes in Public Health Law affecting the Department.

SANITARY CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT

The following are the numbers of closets, ashpits, dustbins, etc.:

Water Closets	1,570
Waste Water Closets	2
Pail Closets	1
Privy Closets	0
Privy Ashpits	0
Dry Ashpits	0
Dustbins	1,550
Cesspools	0
Septic Tanks	15
Houses not connected directly to sewer	33
Houses on Water Carriage System	1,458
Percentage of Closets on Water Carriage System ...	99.99
Percentage of Houses connected to General Sewage System	97.74

Sewers and Sewerage System.—The sewerage, in conjunction with that from Wesham, runs to tanks at Newton and then into the River Ribble. The sewerage disposal works consist of two detritus tanks, six settling tanks and fourteen sludge beds. These were constructed in 1941.

The responsibility for the main sewer and sewerage works is held by the Kirkham and Wesham Joint Sewerage Committee.

Two new houses were connected to the sewerage system during the year.

Rivers and Streams.—One main stream—Wrongway Brook—runs through the district, entering from the Fylde Rural District in a culvert under the railway and discharging into Carr Brook and finally to Dow Brook. This stream forms a portion of the Urban District boundary on the easterly side of the town, and provides most of the natural drainage for the district.

A second stream, commencing at the Bye-Pass end of Orders Lane, runs down Orders Lane, under Poulton Street and Mill Street in a brick culvert, and discharges into Carr Brook at the north-easterly corner of the Flax Mill land.

A joint scheme of co-operation between neighbouring farmers and the Council (all riparian owners of Carr Brook) was carried out. This amounted to a widening and thorough cleansing of the brook, cutting back of banks, etc. This has greatly improved the drainage of the low-lying land adjacent to the tip and whilst the land has flooded during very heavy rain the run-off has been much quicker than previously. The land was flooded only during exceptional rain whereas previously it was subject to flooding with most rains.

Water Supply.—Water is supplied by the Fylde Water Board and is derived from upland surface sources at Grizedale and Higher Hodder. The water supply is of good quality and is adequate in quantity. All houses have supplies available from this source and all have piped supplies available within the house, none being supplied by stand pipes. No complaints were received concerning the water supply. A sample of water was taken on November 6th by Mr. J. G. Sherratt, B.Sc., F.R.I.C., and his report is as follows:

Appearance	clear and colourless
Odour	nil
Reaction, pH	7.0
Parts per million	
Total solids	80
Nitrogen as free and saline ammonia	0.00
Nitrogen as albuminoid ammonia	0.025
Nitrogen as nitrites	nil
Nitrogen as nitrates	1.5
Chlorides, as Cl	9
Oxygen, absorbed from permanganate in 4 hours at 27°C.	0.93
Carbonate Hardness	22
Non-carbonate Hardness	28
Alkalinity	22
Free carbon dioxide	5
pHs	7.0
Free chlorine	nil
Mineral analysis	
Calcium, as Ca	17.6
Magnesium, as Mg	1.7
Sulphate, as SO ₄	25.2
Carbonate, as CO ₃	13.2
Chlorides, as Cl	9
Nitrates, as NO ₃	6.6
Fluorine, as F	less than 0.1
Iron, as Fe	0.14
Poisonous metals	nil
Manganese as Mn	less than 0.05
Potash, as K	0.8
Sodium, as Na	5.2

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT

Summary of Complaints Received — 337 complaints were received during the year, of which many were from Council houses for repairs requiring attention. 1,026 visits were made to premises in connection with this work. 337 nuisances were discovered, of which 315 were abated, leaving 22 to carry forward to 1959. 7 informal notices were served during the year, whilst the number of statutory notices served after reports being made to the Committee was 0. One legal proceeding was taken during the year and in consequence a nuisance was abated and costs were awarded to the Council. In the main most complaints were dealt with after consultation with the landlord concerned. In spite of the high cost of maintenance and low rentals, property is reasonably well maintained. In most cases the tenants are reasonable and do most internal repairs themselves. Advantage is being taken to improve old property under the Housing Repairs and Rents Act.

DISINFESTATIONS

No houses were disinfested during 1958. The methods of treatment are by D.D.T. spray and/or D.D.T. or similar type of smoke generator. In the case of bugs a combination of the two methods—spraying first, followed by smoke generators—has proved most effective. Free issues of insect powder are available, and no charge is made for disinfestation in the case of private dwelling houses.

DISINFECTION AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Three houses were visited for investigation in connection with infectious diseases and instructions were given and disinfectant supplied to the householders for disinfecting their premises. There was no other demand for disinfection of premises. Library books were collected from houses where infectious diseases occurred and were disinfected before return to the Library.

SCHOOLS

The schools were inspected on occasion and were satisfactory apart from minor repairs. All are supplied with water by the Fylde Water Board and all have water closets connected to the sewer. Under an agreement between the Council and the County Education Committee I continued to act as Technical Officer for the Committee for schools in the district. This is a good scheme, as it enables small matters to be dealt with at once without having some other person responsible.

The attention of the Managers of the C. of E. School was drawn to the poor hand washing facilities, absence of hot water, etc. It is understood that several improvements and some extension works for this school are to be carried out.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES, ETC.

There are no common lodging houses or offensive trades within the district.

TENTS, VANS AND SHEDS

There are within the district two sites for caravans, one of them having only one van. In neither case has full planning consent been obtained and complied with. In both cases appeals are pending. The law in regard to caravan sites is most unsatisfactory and difficult to enforce. The larger site has been the subject of many letters between the site owner and the Council, one conditional approval, two refusals and two appeals, and is still not settled after four years. As I mentioned in my previous report, it is my opinion that all vans should be registered with a number in order that an adequate check could be retained. Colours, owners and vans change from time to time and great difficulty is met with from visit to visit in keeping track of any particular vehicle or owner.

CLEAN AIR ACT

The factories in the district were visited and consultations made with the boilermen in an attempt to improve the smoke nuisance. Some complaints were received from time to time and 6 observations were taken on chimneys. Some improvement was made after informal notifications to the firms concerned. No legal actions were taken.

OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH MATTERS

During the year no further applications from persons to be registered as Dealers in Old Metals under Section 86 of the Public Health Act Amendment Act, 1907, were received.

No certificates in respect of means of escape in case of fire were issued during the year.

HOUSE AND TRADE REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

The Council carried out all refuse collection and disposal. They have one modern fore and aft tipper type wagon engaged regularly on this work. A tractor and trailer is used part time on the tip.

Disposal is carried out at Carr Lane tip. The soil is first removed by dragline and then replaced on top as the tip proceeds. Some 1½ acres of reclaimed land are let to a farmer and several successful crops have been grown. The old destructor was retained in use for burning unsound meat, unsalvageable paper and factory wastes.

The number of men engaged on the work is as follows:—

4 Ashbinmen	} Full time.
1 Salvage Baler	
1 Driver	

1 Tractor Driver—Part time.

An extra weekly collection made at the R.A.F. Camp for which the Air Ministry reimbursed the Council was discontinued on the closing down of the camp.

Due to this camp closing the three ton Bedford refuse wagon has been taken out of service and offered for sale.

No serious labour difficulties have been met with but as most of the workmen are becoming older the incidence of sickness is higher and two or three men have asked for lighter work. As no lighter work is available this raises some difficulties and, whilst most of the workmen have served the Council for many years, the time may arise when due to illness and only being fit for light work some will have to look elsewhere for work. It is a fallacy to consider any Council work as light work—a popular concept. The lifting of heavy dustbins, kerbs, flags, excavating and gardening are not particularly light work.

Salvage collection was maintained and the bonus scheme for the men continued. All waste paper was sent to Thames Board Mills Ltd., under contract. Loose tins continued to be baled but disposal was difficult and prices were much lower than in previous years.

The total income during the year was £1,187, being £931 from salvage and £256 from the R.A.F. for the extra weekly collection for part of the year.

The tonnage salvaged was as follows:—

	Tons	Cwts.	Qrs.	Lbs.
Waste Paper (all grades)	96 ...	18 ...	1 ...	4
Rags	7 ...	15 ...	1 ...	14
Food Tins	— ...	— ...	— ...	—
Cast Iron, Scrap Metal, etc.	3 ...	8 ...	3 ...	8
	—	—	—	—
	108 ...	2 ...	1 ...	26
	—	—	—	—

The total cost of refuse collection and disposal was £3,935, equal to a $1/6\frac{1}{2}$ d. rate. Wage increases again account for the increased costs.

FOOD AND DRUGS ADMINISTRATION

Visits were made to premises where foodstuffs were handled or sold.

The number of visits made to food premises during the year, including the slaughterhouse, was 149.

Some improvements have been made to food premises, most of which were carried out as a result of informal action. This work is proceeding. Follow-up visits have been made. A local food factory the subject of previous legal actions has now closed.

The following items of food were inspected, found unfit and surrendered by shopkeepers for destruction.

60lbs. Pork Luncheon Meat, 101½lbs. Cooked Ham, 6lbs. Ox Tongue, 80¾lbs. Corned Beef.

One slaughterhouse is in operation in the district. All meat is inspected and the premises are satisfactory. The owners of this slaughterhouse have been most co-operative and improvements are being made from time to time.

Carcases inspected and condemned were as follows:—

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	264	1	8	717	136
Number inspected	264	1	8	717	136
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci:					
Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	71	1	—	—	8
Percentage of the number in- spected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis and Cysticerci	26.89	100	—	—	5.882
Tuberculosis only:					
Whole carcasses condemned	1	—	—	—	—
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	9	—	—	—	6
Percentage of number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	2.652	—	—	—	4.413
Cysticercosis:					
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	2	—	—	—	—
Carcasses submitted to treat- ment by refrigeration	—	—	—	—	—
Generalises and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—

The total weight of meat condemned (including offal) was 1,747lbs.

Milk Supply and Distribution.—There is one large dairy and pasteurising plant in the town supplying milk to the surrounding districts. The supervision of this plant is done by the Lancashire County Council. The number of registered dealers is as follows:

Licensed to sell Pasteurised Milk	12
Licensed to sell Tuberculin Tested Milk Pasteurised	11
Licensed to sell Sterilised Milk	13
Licensed to sell Tuberculin Tested Milk Farm Bottled ...	11

No complaints were received in regard to the milk supply. Only “specially designated” milk (that is, pasteurised, sterilised or tuberculin tested milk) can now be sold in Kirkham under the provisions of The Milk (Special Designations) (Specified Areas) (No. 2) Order, 1955, which came into force on the 6th December, 1955.

Ice Cream.—There is one registration for the manufacture of ice cream. The premises have been inspected and always found to be well run and maintained. Twenty-nine dealers are registered for the sale and storage of ice cream. The general standard of vehicles and equipment is high. No complaints were received in regard to ice cream.

Made-up Foods, Potted Meats, etc.—Four premises are registered to manufacture made-up meat products. A good standard of cleanliness was maintained.

Food Sampling by the County Council.—Forty samples were taken by County Inspectors during the year, comprising:—

24 Milk, 1 Sago, 1 Flour, 1 Camphorated Oil, 1 Yeast Tablets, 2 Flour Confectionery, 1 Linctus of Codeine, 3 Whisky, 2 Butter, 1 Margarine, 1 Rice, 1 Bread, 1 Tea.

All the samples were analysed by the County Analyst and were reported to be genuine with the exception of a sample of Linctus of Codeine which did not conform to the current formulation in the B.P.C. Supplement, the manufacturer concerned was notified.

SHOPS AND OFFICES

Twelve visits were made in connection with the Shops Acts,

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

(1) INSPECTIONS FOR PURPOSES OF PROVISIONS AS TO HEALTH INCLUDING INSPECTIONS MADE BY PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

Premises	Number of		
	Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
Factories with Mechanical power ...	3	—	—
Factories without Mechanical power	—	—	—
Other premises under the Act (in- cluding Building and Engineering construction, but not including outworkers' premises)	—	—	—
Total	3	—	—

(2) DEFECTS FOUND.

PARTICULARS.	Number of Defects.			Number of Defects in respect of which Prosecu- tions were Instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred by H.M. Inspector	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Want of Cleanliness (S.1)	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3) ...	—	—	—	—
Inadequate Ventilation (S.4)	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6) .	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences (S.7):—				
Insufficient	—	—	—	—
Unsuitable or defective	—	—	—	—
Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—
Other Offences	—	—	—	—
Total	—	—	—	—

RAG-FLOCK AND OTHER FILLING MATERIALS ACT, 1951

Three premises are registered under the above Act. Three inspections were made of them during the year. No samples were taken. The amount of this material used is very small.

RODENT CONTROL

Fifteen properties infested by rats or mice were treated during the year by the Rodent Operator. This man has had Ministry training in modern methods and has had much success. The standard Ministry methods are used. The sewers were treated twice and forty-five takes recorded. The amount of sewer infestation appears to be small.

PETROLEUM ACTS

Fourteen premises are licensed to store petroleum and one to store cellulose. In every case the petroleum is stored in underground tanks. The total storage capacity is 20,580 gallons. No notices were served under these Acts, and no new premises were licensed.

HOUSING

Number of houses on Rate Books	1,459
Number of new houses erected during the year:	
(a) By the Local Authority	0
(b) By other bodies or persons	2
Number of houses demolished during the year	0
Number of persons displaced	0
Number of improvement grant applications received during the year	8
Number of houses in which improvement works were completed during the year	7

Housing Conditions.—The general housing conditions are fair, the houses being mostly small to medium sized of both parlour and non-parlour type. There is a considerable proportion of old property in the district, some of which has been scheduled for demolition, whilst the remainder is suitable for improvement. Some advantage has been taken of facilities offered by the Council to improve property by means of Improvement Grants.

Although many of the old houses are of poor external appearance, they are mainly well kept and the internal condition is good. In the main tenants show great pride in their houses.

Suitable accommodation for old persons is still required but the Council are now contemplating a scheme for dealing with same. The Council are not at present contemplating building any houses for general need, as the withdrawal of Government subsidies means that rents would be too high.

There are still a good number of applicants for Council Houses but very few are really bad cases and it is hoped that the worst cases will be dealt with by normal turn over of existing houses,

The Council made a start on their slum clearance programme during 1958, and the 38 new dwellings being erected should be completed and occupied by the middle of 1959.

The number of private houses being erected continues to be very small. No doubt the high cost of building and the shortage of ripe building land combine to deter would-be private developers.

Many houses are still sub-standard but where it is felt that the houses could be improved landlords and owner-occupiers are encouraged to apply for an improvement grant, and 8 applications were received during the year. The results of these are excellent and have made first-class houses. There are still many houses suitable for improvement and it is hoped that further advantage will be taken of this provision. Applicants are given full advice and help from the Department.

The Council have continued to give every opportunity to prospective buyers by operating the Small Dwellings Acquisition Acts and by standing as guarantors for persons buying through Building Societies.

The Department is also responsible for the maintenance and cleansing of highways, supervision of new buildings, street lighting, parks, baths and recreation grounds. Schemes have been prepared to make-up two private streets and two other private streets have been made up during the year. Whilst these are not public health matters, the making-up of streets from dusty or muddy surfaces to properly paved streets must indirectly be a help to public health. The streets completed are on two sides of the School Clinic and accordingly access to that clinic has been improved and is much appreciated. The Department will endeavour to proceed with the making-up of all unmade streets as soon as the Council authorise same.

STAFF

My thanks are again expressed for the efficient service rendered by my staff—Mr. N. Swift, the Clerk in the Department, and Mr. B. D. Rogerson, the Pupil Public Health Inspector—and for the excellent and willing co-operation from other members of the staff, the Foreman, and all workmen.

I remain,

Your obedient servant,

E. RIDDIOUGH.

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